

What is claimed is:

CLAIMS

1. A method for analyzing verbal communication, the method comprising acts of:

(A) producing an electronic recording of a plurality of spoken words;

5 (B) processing the electronic recording to identify a plurality of word alternatives for each of the spoken words, each of the plurality of word alternatives being identified by comparing a portion of the electronic recording with a lexicon, each of the plurality of word alternatives being assigned a probability of correctly identifying a spoken word;

(C) loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database for subsequent
10 analysis; and

(D) examining the word alternatives and the probabilities to determine at least one characteristic of the plurality of spoken words.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a frequency with
15 which a first word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a frequency with which a second word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words, and a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word
20 alternative.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative in a plurality of time periods.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a presence of a pattern, the pattern comprising a defined sequence of word alternatives.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the pattern is defined by a human user.

30 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the pattern is defined using a graphical user interface.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising an act, performed before the act (B), comprising modifying the lexicon.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the act (C) further comprises loading the word
5 alternatives and the probabilities to a database.

10. A computer-readable medium having instructions recorded thereon, which instructions, when executed by a computer, perform a method for analyzing verbal communication, the method comprising acts of:

10 (A) producing an electronic recording of a plurality of spoken words;

(B) processing the electronic recording to identify a plurality of word alternatives for each of the spoken words, each of the plurality of word alternatives being identified by comparing a portion of the electronic recording with a lexicon, each of the plurality of word alternatives being assigned a probability of correctly identifying a spoken word;

15 (C) loading the word alternatives and the probabilities to a database for subsequent analysis; and

(D) examining the word alternatives and the probabilities to determine at least one characteristic of the plurality of spoken words.

20 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a frequency with which a first word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a frequency with which a second word alternative occurs within the plurality of spoken words,
25 and a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the at least one characteristic further includes a comparison of the frequencies of the first word alternative and the second word alternative in a
30 plurality of time periods.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one characteristic includes a presence of a pattern, the pattern comprising a defined sequence of word alternatives.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the pattern is defined by a human user.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the pattern is defined using a graphical user interface.

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17. The method of claim 10, further comprising an act, performed before the act (B), comprising modifying the lexicon.

18. The method of claim 10, wherein the act (C) further comprises loading the word
10 alternatives and the probabilities to a database.

19. In a computer-implemented system comprising a speech recognition tool and an electronic file storage, the speech recognition tool operable to process an electronic recording of a phrase to recognize a plurality of alternatives for the phrase, the electronic file storage
15 storing at least a portion of the plurality of alternatives recognized by the speech recognition tool, a method for analyzing speech data, the method comprising acts of:

(A) creating a pattern, wherein the pattern comprises a data structure which includes a representation of at least one word;

(B) comparing the pattern to the alternatives stored in the electronic file storage;

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and

(C) storing an indication of a match between the pattern and any of the alternatives.

20. The method of claim 19, further comprising acts of:

(D) providing a pattern score; and

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(E) assigning the pattern score to any of the alternatives which match the pattern.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising acts of:

(F) providing a segment, the segment having a threshold score; and

(G) assigning an alternative to the segment when the pattern score assigned to the

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alternative meets or exceeds the threshold score.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the act (A) further comprises creating a plurality of patterns, the act (B) further comprises comparing each of the plurality of patterns to the

alternatives stored in electronic file storage, the act (C) further comprises storing an indication of a match between any of the plurality of patterns and any of the alternatives, the act (D) further comprises providing a pattern score for each of the plurality of patterns, the act (E) further comprises assigning a respective pattern score to an alternative which matches any of the plurality of patterns, and the act (G) further comprises assigning an alternative to the segment when the sum of the pattern scores assigned to the alternative meets or exceeds the threshold score.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein the electronic file storage comprises a database system.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the database is a relational database system, and wherein the act (B) is performed by incorporating the pattern into a Structured Query Language (SQL) query command which is processed by the relational database system.

25. The method of claim 19, wherein the system further comprises a graphical user interface (GUI), and wherein the act (A) further comprises a user employing the GUI to construct the pattern.

26. The method of claim 19, wherein the act (C) further comprises storing the indication in the electronic file storage.

27. A computer-readable medium having instructions recorded thereon, the instructions, when executed by a computer, perform a method, in a computer-implemented system comprising a speech recognition tool and an electronic file storage, the speech recognition tool operable to process an electronic recording of a phrase to recognize a plurality of alternatives for the phrase, the electronic file storage storing at least a portion of the plurality of alternatives recognized by the speech recognition tool, the method for analyzing speech data, the method comprising acts of:

(A) creating a pattern, wherein the pattern comprises a data structure which includes a representation of at least one word;

(B) comparing the pattern to the alternatives stored in the electronic file storage; and

(C) storing an indication of a match between the pattern and any of the alternatives.

28. The computer-readable medium of claim 27, further comprising acts of:
- (D) providing a pattern score; and
 - (E) assigning the pattern score to any of the alternatives which match the pattern.

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29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28, further comprising acts of:
- (F) providing a segment, the segment having a threshold score; and
 - (G) assigning an alternative to the segment when the pattern score assigned to the alternative meets or exceeds the threshold score.

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30. The computer-readable medium of claim 29, wherein the act (A) further comprises creating a plurality of patterns, the act (B) further comprises comparing each of the plurality of patterns to the alternatives stored in electronic file storage, the act (C) further comprises storing an indication of a match between any of the plurality of patterns and any of the alternatives, the
- 15 act (D) further comprises providing a pattern score for each of the plurality of patterns, the act (E) further comprises assigning a respective pattern score to an alternative which matches any of the plurality of patterns, and the act (G) further comprises assigning an alternative to the segment when the sum of the pattern scores assigned to the alternative meets or exceeds the threshold score.

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31. The computer-readable medium of claim 27, wherein the electronic file storage comprises a database system.

32. The computer-readable medium of claim 31, wherein the database is a relational
- 25 database system, and wherein the act (B) is performed by incorporating the pattern into a Structured Query Language (SQL) query command which is processed by the relational database system.

33. The computer-readable medium of claim 27, wherein the system further comprises a
- 30 graphical user interface (GUI), and wherein the act (A) further comprises a user employing the GUI to construct the pattern.

34. The computer-readable medium of claim 27, wherein the act (C) further comprises storing the indication in the electronic file storage.